6: Sauer--124 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut
116, 156, 181, 557, 888, 623

"They are very revengeful of insults; nay, even entail revenge on their progeny: or do they ever forget a benefit received; for they not only make restitution, but recommend to their offspring the ties of friendship and gratitude to their benefactors. They are very obedient to their chiefs and oghoniors, [RCH: senior members of the group; see catagory 116, p. 117, footnote] and shew their attachment by frequent visits and presents. They are extremely hospitable and attentive to travellers, especially to such as behave with a degree of good nature, and very inquisitive and intelligent; for they ask questions freely, and answer any without embarrassment or hesitation. They are anxious to secure friendship and a good name, and seem to study the dispositions of such as may be of service to them, to whom they are liberal in presents, and even in flattery. They deliberate in council on all matters of public concern, as the course to be taken by each in the chase, &c. The oghoniors are surrounded by the rest, and their advice is always taken. I have never seen an old man contradicted or opposed, but always as implicitly obeyed as a father of a family. A young man ever gives his opinion with the greatest respect and caution; and even when asked, he submits his ideas to the judgement of the old."

46: Cottrell--137 T-2 (1840) 1842 Yakut
116, 177, 622, 623 Russia
636.62

"The former [RCH: i.e., Yakuts] are divided into communities, which are governed by golovás and knaizetzes or ancients. The first are chosen among the second, and they from and by the common people; all, however, are subject to provincial commissaries appointed by the Russian government. From the resemblance between the Russian word knäs or prince, and knaizetz, the latter got the title of highness in Russia, but the Yakuts before the Russian conquest even never had independent princes. The title of golová, on the contrary, being one of very slight importance in Russia, they were placed below the knaizetzes, though at home they enjoy much higher rank and authority."

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

the whole of their lives, and only occasionally eat their fill . . . it is a country of systematic starvation."[4] But the Yakut toiling masses were particularly badly off during the long and severe Yakutiyan winter. "The periods of hunger," wrote another observer, "when there is absolutely nothing to eat, when all the crumbs have been picked up and consumed, when the cows carrying calves are not milked, and nature, paralyzed by the cold, firmly resists all attempts to find food, are repeated every year and two-thirds of the Yakut population have to suffer for a fairly prolonged period on this account." [5]

On the other hand, individuals with fortunes of tens of thousands of rubles stood out among the wealthy Yakut hierarchy. The wealthy estates developed mainly through trade and various kinds of speculation, although the owners did not hesitate to apply the old patriarchal-feudal methods of exploitation in amassing their wealth.

Crushed by the omnipotence of the toyons, the masses of poor people in the ulus hardly dared to protest or fight for their rights. It was only now and then that the toyon oppression gave rise to outbursts of protest, but these were sporadic and promptly suppressed. This was the fate of the revolt of Vasiliy Manchara (1830-1850), hero of the Yakut legends.

Given the sharp class contradictions, it was extremely characteristic that certain very archaic survivals were retained in the Yakut social structure and left on it their own strange imprint. Some of these survivals were nothing more than form devoid of its original content.

Right up to the Revolution the Yakuts retained their division into clans (*нараспы*). But the clans were purely administrative units legalized by the "Native Code" of 1822, although they were historically descended from the ancient clans of the clan-tribal stage.

At the head of these administrative clans stood elected elders (who were called in the old-fashioned Yakut language "princelings" (kinees, or achchygyy kinees—"small princeling"). Several clans banded into a nasleg, which was also governed by an elected elder (in actual fact often hereditary), known in the Yakut language as ulakhan kinees or "great prince," who together with the clan elders made up the "clan administration." A group of naslegs formed an ulus, at the head of which there was an elected ulus head and a "native council." The ulusy, and also some of the naslegs, and even the clans, were historically associated with the ancient Yakut tribes, whose names they continued to bear—for example, the Meginskiy, Borogonskiy, Baturusskiy, Namskiy, Western and Eastern Kangalasskiy and other ulusy, the Betyunskiy, Batulinskiy, Ospetskiy and other naslegs.

At the end of the 19th century there were in all 17 ulusy, divided into 230 naslegs and 934 clans in the Yakut district (in the four okrugs—Yakutskiy, Vilyuyskiy, Verkhoyanskiy and Kolymskiy, since in the fifth—Olekminskiy Okrug—the ulusy were replaced by volosts of the Russian type).

Only the terminology of the tribal structure was retained in this administrative system. In actual fact, the tribal administrations and native councils were only organs of power of the ruling toyon stratum

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[4] V. F. Troshchanskiy. Nabroski o yakutakh Yakutskogo okruga (Notes on the Yakuts in the Yakutskiy Okrug). Kazan', 1911, p. 17.

[5] V. L. Seroshevskiy. Yakuty (opyt etnograficheskogo issledovaniya), 1 (The Yakuts [Attempt at an Ethnographic Study]). St. Petersburg, 1896, p.423.